1: Lee H-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1
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eventually held in March, 1938, under a changed electoral law which permitted married women to vote but forbade candidates to run as members of the old political parties. In May, 1938, the *sobranie* met for the first time since 1935, but found itself reduced to the position of a consulting body.

The political crises of the period after 1933 were but outward expressions of the serious economic condition in which Bulgaria, along with all other predominantly agrarian countries of eastern Europe, had found itself as a result of the world-wide economic depression. At the same time both Italy and Germany sought to bring Bulgaria into their political and economic orbits. Bulgaria for several years seemed to waver between them and their rivals in power politics. Although its refusal to join the Balkan Entente, because of its revisionist territorial claims, seemed to align Bulgaria with Italy, a tense situation was avoided by the signature of a Pact of Friendship with Yugoslavia on January 24, 1937. In 1938 when the east European atmosphere had become clouded because of Germany's annexation of Austria and the developing Munich crisis, Bulgaria gained recognition of the right to rearm by means of an agreement in July with Greece who acted on behalf of the Balkan Entente. This was followed by an Anglo-French loan amounting to ten million dollars to assist in Bulgarian rearmament, although Germany had already supplied much material toward this end. Nevertheless, Germany had two advantages over its rivals. One was its freedom to encourage Bulgarian revisionist ambitions which, after the Bulgar-Yugoslav pact, tended to create greatest tension with Romania over the Dobruja. The other was the powerful economic tie developed between the two countries by means of trade agreements. After Austria and part of Czechoslovakia had been incorporated in the Nazi Reich in 1939 about 52 per cent of Bulgaria's exports went to Germany and about 63 per cent of its imports came from there.

It is doubtful, however, if the developing ties with Germany influenced the feelings of the Bulgarian people. Tsar Boris and his governments, even though they sanctioned agreements by which the political police cooperated with the Gestapo in pursuing "Communists," sought to keep down native fascism. There was, moreover, very little antisemitism in Bulgaria. The political opposition composed of the former Agrarian, Liberal, Radical, Socialist, and Democratic party elements, was by its nature antagonistic to Nazism. And, finally, the people had always retained a deepseated feeling of sympathy and respect for Russia against whom the Nazis were ostensibly aligned. Indeed, right down to 1941 there was much ground for believing that Bulgaria might well maintain neutrality in the second World War.

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trees above, pitiful reminders of a once-proud forest. A hurried mountain stream called Dragalevtsy River passes through the village and, in doing so, turns the grist mills and assists with the washing of clothes. 133

A mile to the east of Dragalevtsy is Simeonovo, a settlement decidedly run-down at the heel. It was here that I spent a busy morning trying to explain to two villagers that the earth was really global rather than flat. Farther on around the shoulder of the mountain is Bistritsa, where the people are said to sing as they dance the *horo:* 186

> "There is no city more populous than Sofia,
> There is no river more majestic than the Iskar,
> There is no mountain more lofty than Vitosha."

This is an accurate illustration of ethnocentrism, or the belief prevalent among most people that they, and they alone, are the center of the universe and God's chosen children.

My usual approach to the village was across the unfenced fields and up the mountainside. Sometimes I came along the dull road from Sofia. By either way, the great mountain, changing color from hour to hour, was a rest to the eyes. The way across the fields led one gently into the village through patches of vegetable gardens and clumps of overhanging fruit trees. Upon entering the village from the direction of Sofia I passed the cemetery and then was closed in between whitewashed walls which lined the curving streets. Animals also felt much at home in these streets. Just before sunset the village goatherd headed the two hundred animals in his care toward the settlement. Into Renaissance Square they trotted, a capering mass of gray, black, and white. At each street several goats detached themselves from the rest to run unguided into their respective dwellings. The same scene occurred when the pigs came squealing home. At other times of day peasant girls passed by carrying washing to be pounded on rocks and dipped into the icy water of Dragalevtsy River. Hikers, many of them, lounged around Bai Penko's, or tramped through the streets obviously amused at the manners of the peasants. 631 [231]

Few things were as dependent upon the weather as the state of the village streets: muddy beyond description in the autumn and spring, 132

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888 cide was by that time an out-of-date practice no longer linked with the precarious economic existence of a wandering people.

539 But it was a far cry from the cessation of the killing of aged
888 parents to the "Honor thy father and mother" of the Decalogue, which
593 later became a part of the Bulgarian family system. The peasants had another story to explain this dramatic change:

"In the olden days, when fathers died the sons would drag the bodies with a hook to a stream or gully and push the bodies in. One day a middle-aged man returned home from disposing of his father's body in this way, but failed to bring back the hook. Whereupon his own son in greeting him said:

" 'But, father, where is the hook? What will I use when I drag you away?'

"This made the father thoughtful, then remorseful. It was then that he retrieved his father's body and gave it a proper burial. Since then sons have been more respectful."

593 At any rate, whatever may be the explanation, the patriarchal
562 system with its respect for and obedience to the father won out. Con-
175 tact with Byzantine culture until the coming of the Turks must have reinforced the Bulgarian father's right to dominate his family. He
186 became more fully acquainted with the *patria potestas* which had been too strongly entrenched in the Roman family system to be forgotten by the Byzantines. Likewise, the patriarchal emphasis of the Old Testament and the Pauline epistles of the New aided in the continuance
175 of male supremacy. It is fascinating indeed to observe the response that the Slavicized Bulgarians made to the Byzantine culture in general. First they opposed cultural assimilation by force of arms; more than once the armies of the Bulgarian kings thundered at the gates of Constantinople in Bulgaria's proud golden age (about 900). Military expeditions, however, proved inadequate, with the result that the Bulgarian leaders sought to build a Slavic culture to rival that of the Greeks. It was this new culture which kept the feeling of national uniqueness alive among the Bulgarians, while other tribes upon entering that region became so thoroughly absorbed into the Byzantine Empire that they ended as curious names of the past with no modern representatives.

000 resemble you." Confused, the Pasha looked at Dragana's sons, saw the resemblance, and called off the death sentence.

●186 This story,[1] in addition to its glorification of Baba Dragana's love
175 of country at the expense of her morals, gives us a picture of government under the Turks. Despite the claims of some Bulgarian historians, Bulgaria was not badly off before the end of the seventeenth century. It was during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that Turkish rule became oppressive in its efforts to stamp out the spread of revolts owing, in no small measure, to the spread of national consciousness among the subject peoples. As a matter of fact, Bulgarian historians deplore more vigorously the actions of the Greek clergy who arranged with the Sultan to collect all religious fees from the people. Whereas the Turks were little interested in mass conversions to Mohammedanism, the Greeks were said to be desirous of so Hellenizing the Bulgarians that they would lose their sense of nationality. These Greek priests, however, had so much contempt for the villagers that they made little effort to influence the peasant population.

175 This period of bondage to the Turks and the Greek priests must have made the family and the village community much better integrated social units. Struggle with an outsider tends to do that. The peasants put higher walls around their yards so Turkish soldiers would not be attracted by something seen while passing. Girls who went to a friend's home for an evening spinning bee spent the night there rather than risk the possibility of capture by the Turks on the dark way home. Even today this custom persists, perhaps because Dragalevtsy youths occasionally steal their brides. Certainly Turkish influence did nothing to weaken the man's authority; at the same time it probably strengthened monogamy because of the unpleasant association of polygamy with things Turkish.

Many of the older Dragalevtsy residents with whom I talked looked back upon the Turkish rule as preferable to their present lot. They said that they were seldom disturbed by the Turkish officials unless they molested the Turks or were forced to contribute men and materials to the Sultan's army. Of course, the Turkish tax collectors also made their regular visits, at which times many peasants con-

[1] [See p. 63, category 116--Analyst]

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were busily preparing the big meal to be served after the church ceremony every now and then rushed out with something for me to taste, with the groom's father insisting that I sample some of the choice wine or brandy purchased just for the wedding.

The dance I had come to see did not begin until afternoon. It lacked the enthusiasm which I had learned to anticipate, but was nevertheless colorful: the girls and women wore their most beautiful costumes; the men were neatly dressed, some in army uniforms; the leader of the *horo* carried the Bulgarian flag of white, green, and red, taking care that it did not catch in the overhanging branches. (In time of war the colors are reversed with the red bar on top.) This dance really was the prelude to the gay procession which headed for the church about two-thirty. First came the musicians with their battered instruments; then the principals of the wedding, followed by the guests. The flag was there, as well as Bulgarian tricolor sashes over the shoulders of the men.

Ordinarily the bride was a gay figure in the procession, her somber black overdress brightened with huge silver belt buckles and cherished strings of thin gold coins handed down for generations from mother to daughter. Hair and face shining with cleanliness, she moved in her wedding procession, happy, although considerably confused by her prominent position. But this particular bride had no ornaments—(Had her parents refused to send them?)—except a flower over her ear and the usual short, coarse white veil on her head. She did have on real leather shoes, instead of the customary pigskin sandals, but that was the only elaboration of her costume. It was hard to get her to smile for her picture; but when her new brother and sister each took an arm to encourage her, the broad, rather dull face suddenly lit up and a pair of beautiful dark eyes looked shyly at my camera.

All the village turned out to see the procession pass. Swarms of children came racing down the principal streets at the sound of the music. Once we had entered the churchyard I learned that they were there to scramble for the candy and coins which were thrown in the air along with rice to symbolize sweetness, wealth, and productivity. But this came at the end of the ceremony, and the children stood

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When I pressed him for his reasons, fully expecting him to say that he was yielding to the pressure of his wife or public opinion, he gravely replied:

"You see in Sofia I did not own any of my own cloth but now I have a great deal downstairs which I must protect from the mice." I might mention in passing that Bai Yurdan had become a faithful member of the Communist party.

The wolf holidays were still observed for three days following the Day of the Archangel Michael, which comes on November 21. During these days the peasants were careful to do no work and refused to cook or boil anything. Such rigid observances, they believed, protected their sheep from wolves, which were still numerous upon the mountain.

One event of overshadowing importance in the changes which had occurred in Dragalevtsy since 1937 had been its incorporation in Greater Sofia in 1939. Even though their village was close to Sofia, Dragalevtsy people had always considered themselves quite apart, and looked upon Sofia ways as alien ways. However, Sofia politicians managed to bring the village under the sway of the city's municipality. Most villagers considered this an evil day in the history of their community and could cite a number of disadvantages which had occurred as a result. One of the village officials, whom I had known previously, complained particularly about the following points:

1. The city municipality had taken over the forests.

2. It had taken over the meadows which the peasants owned in common. For instance, the villagers no longer did the haying in the meadows which used to belong to the school because all of the revenue from the sale of this hay went to the Sofia School Fund. This meant that the three Dog Days,[1] described in an earlier chapter, were once more days of idleness.

3. Formerly the Dragalevtsy Obshtina collected seven or eight million leva in taxes, but since incorporation with Sofia had only a budget of one million on which to operate. My informant failed to mention that much of this money came from the factory district down on the Sofia plain which had once, much to the dissatisfaction of the

[1] [Cf. p. 58, category III -- Analyst]

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CHAPTER XI

COMMUNISM KNOCKS AT THE DOOR

668 COMMUNISM came in the dead of the night. Dragalevtsy people awoke on September 6, 1944, the morning after Russia had declared war on Bulgaria, to find big posters proclaiming throughout the village such slogans as "Welcome to the Heroic Red Army" or "Long Live Stalin."

The peasants realized in retrospect how well organized everything must have been, for these signs showed that the local Communist sympathizers had been ready for this big event. One or two had fought in the mountains against the Germans as Bulgarian Partisans and had been schooled in the part they were to play when the Germans were finally driven out.

668 648 182 On September 16, 1944, at least eighty villagers from Dragalevtsy had gone to Sofia to welcome the Russians. Traditions live long in Dragalevtsy, and especially the tradition of brotherly Russia and its overwhelming contribution in emancipating Bulgaria from the Turks in 1878. So this demonstration of admiration for the Russians was genuine and spontaneous. Many parents took their children along so the youngsters could describe to their children and their children's children the excitement and greatness of this day. And the spectacle was one that was memorable, not like the arrival of the Nazis for whom there had been admiration mixed with fear, but rather the arrival of brother Slavs who would help Bulgaria grow great and strong. Thus the peasants had thought.

But news travels fast in Bulgaria and usually becomes altered in the traveling. Within five days, the people of Dragalevtsy heard so many rumors about the Russians that they soon had become afraid. They were especially nonplussed by the Russians' disregard for property. They heard about a man from another village who had been

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hauling corn in his oxcart. Russian soldiers told him to stop, get out, and give them the oxen, the cart, and the corn. He insisted that they must pay him, at which they laughed. Stubborn as only a *Shop* peasant can be, he sat rigidly in his cart to protect his own. From this point on versions differed: some said he was pulled out and beaten, others that he was shot and left dead by the roadside. And always the tale ended with, "The Germans always paid us, but the Russians never did."

But the Communists offered an explanation for the differences in the behavior of the two armies. The Russians invaded in battle order, which necessitated eating off the land on a catch-as-catch-can basis. The Germans, on the other hand, had sent large staffs ahead to make preparations for the coming of their troops. The net effect upon the peasant mentality was radically different, since property rights seemed violated by the Russians and respected by the Nazis.

Eventually a detachment of Russians had been established around Dragalevtsy. They frequented the taverns so constantly and with such enthusiasm that the peasants had a new saying: "There's nothing worse than drunken Russians." They began to judge the Russian nation by the off-time indulgences of its soldiers.

Although the "great disillusionment" regarding Russian soldiers had begun soon after their arrival, the people still hoped that all would go well politically. Most of the major political parties—the Agrarians, the Zveno, and the Democrats—joined with the Communists in September, 1944, to form a coalition, which they called the Fatherland Front. It was this government that conducted the purge, or the sentencing of about three thousand men and women by the people's courts on the grounds of collaboration with the enemy. About two thousand of these were executed. Some observers now feel, in the light of later developments, that the real basis of selecting victims for trial was not only their complicity with the Germans but also their danger as potential rallying points for a counterrevolution against the Fatherland Front. Two Dragalevtsy young men were tried and executed for collaboration with the Nazis. According to village reports, Communist sympathizers tried to exert pressure upon the new priest in the hope of preventing his officiating at any funeral ceremonies or memorial services for these men. According to the Com-

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port was the unquestioned popularity in Dragalevtsy of the *Green Banner,* the newspaper published by the opposition Agrarian group. As long as the opposition press continued to circulate throughout the country, the tried and trusted technique of one-sided interpretation could not be brought into full play. Schoolbooks could be rewritten, pamphleteering could be done in the Communist children's and youth organizations, but these activities were much less effective when other groups could print their versions to serve as antidotes. One-party control, such as the Fatherland Front wanted for Bulgaria, was authoritarian. It preferred to have no alternative opinions presented to the people, and felt that as long as it alone could tell the people what they ought to believe, the people would be well off, for they would be indoctrinated with the truth, as the Communist saw the truth.

Another weapon which the Communists hoped to use as a means of penetration was Pan-Slavism, especially among the Bulgarians. The members of the Red Army, however, instead of being missionaries of this mystic racial dogma, did it the greatest harm. Occupying armies seldom become popular, especially when the mass is held accountable for the sins of the few. The peasants were only too prone to fall into the error of the "lumping fallacy," and condemned all Russians on the basis of a few spectacular events which occurred in the village. One happening which Dragalevtsy peasants used in forming their attitude involved two peasant girls whom I had photographed as children several years before. Now that they were in their late teens they proved unusually attractive to two drunken Russian privates who tried to break into their house late one night. Although a noncommissioned officer came to order them away, these soldiers cursed him and kept on pounding against the door of the living-room. The door held fast, and they finally gave up and went away. Had they but known it, the lock had already been smashed; all they needed to do was to turn the knob and enter a room where the peasant family sat in mortal fear. The father knew that to fight for the honor of his daughters would have meant a bullet from a drunken soldier's pistol; the mother sat in prayer before the crude iconostas, while the girls cried softly at the thought of what seemed to be in store for them. In a village where immorality was frowned upon so strongly, this

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668 attempted assault was an experience which would be told and retold
186 generation after generation, with some such bitter moral at the end as "And those were our brother Slavs."

668 626 Perhaps the most important technique of control was the effective play upon the fears of the people. Fearful people are a paralyzed people, and it was this creeping paralysis which was beginning to wear down the opposition and make possible Communism's eventual triumph. Sometimes events reached such a climax that fear was turned into action, but matters in December, 1945, were not reaching such a climax. Little by little the people were being made more fearful of the future, especially with the decline of British and American prestige. One never knew when the walls might have ears, or whom one could trust, or when one's home would be invaded and searched. One woman Communist spread a story about a neighbor's hoarding; he was twice arrested and his house searched three times, although the rumor was apparently unfounded. Grudges were sometimes "settled" when one of the parties tipped off the authorities to the failure of the other party to follow some unpopular regulation. Accompanying this fear was the belief that one would not have due protection of the law at a trial, since the new law was being written as cases came up, with little reference to prewar statutes or precedents. One was at the mercy of the court where the all-important question too often had become, "Did you or did you not fight against the Fascist German hordes?" Conceivably in the not-too-distant future the "sixty-four dollar question" might be, "Have you ever been sympathetic to Anglo-American interventionists and reactionaries?"*

When I asked my Communist acquaintances how they justified the interpretation of justice which I have been describing, they flashed back, as though well drilled: "But in America does the Negro or the poor man get justice? Don't the courts serve the interests of the rich? Here in Bulgaria our courts do not serve the interests of the privileged, but rather the good of the masses." I already knew that some of these Communist converts had been motivated by the highest idealism, that they felt they had a remedy for the economic and political evils of their country, and that any means they used to correct those evils would

* An observation made in 1946, which has become only too true in 1948.

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with a relationship as deep-rooted as that of the Balkan peasant to his land, he is also creating the seeds out of which a spontaneous resistance movement could grow. There is little evidence of collectivization at present, but the peasants are not convinced that it is not just around the corner.

Then too, the Balkan peasants, especially in the settled agricultural areas, have not taken kindly to Communism because they characterize it as an urban movement. When seasoned Communists try to converse with peasants about the merits of the Russian system their factory-oriented dialectic falls flat. Nor have they developed an agricultural vocabulary with which to communicate intelligibly with the rural people. The more the Balkan Communists talk, the more the peasants are convinced of the urban orientation of the new government. They consider it anti-Agrarian and anti-peasant. In an attempt to overcome this reserve to their program the Communists organize deputation teams of artisans who spend Sundays out in carefully selected villages helping the peasants repair their wagons, mend their pots and pans, or they even bring along a corps of barbers to cut the villagers' hair. The spirit behind such a move is to have the artisans show by their deeds, "You see, we are your friends. We're all brother Bulgarians [or Yugoslavs, as the case may be]." But it takes more than this to sell such a radical program as Communism to the capitalistic-minded peasant.

The rural villagers elsewhere in the Balkans, as well as in Dragalevtsy, resent the term worker. Newspapers studiously attempt to get the worker ideology accepted by the rural citizens, but the social statuses of the peasant and the worker are such that the government is asking the former to step down a rung, in the peasant's estimation. So Communism is thought to represent a backward rather than a forward move, and is related to the all-important matter of land: the peasant generally possesses it, whereas the worker is usually landless.

Many analyses of the Balkan problems play up rightly the role of the church, whether it be Eastern Orthodox or Roman Catholic, in the peasants' lack of enthusiasm for Communism. Others stress the generations-old nationality antipathies which have some influence. Certainly Pan-Slavism is not paying high dividends in rural areas in

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668 641 ● 186 spite of heroic efforts by Russian ballet and athletic troupes who tour the provinces of all the Balkan lands. Other writers seek to show that modern Communism is merely a fulfillment of the traditional Communism of the zadruga, but they fail to point out that the zadruga was built around the family and land owned by that family, whereas modern Communism is centered around an impersonal state and ideology. To shift their loyalties from the family to such a state or to replace their religion with a new ideology is asking a great deal of the relatively inelastic peasant mass. State loyalties in the past were built upon joining the army and fighting, even to death, when one's country was threatened, but in times of peace one returned to the native village and had as little as possible to do with the national government after that. But the new turn of events in the Balkans seeks to whip up enthusiasm for the government, morning, noon, and night, when all that the peasants ask is "Please leave us alone."

000 The future seems to hold little peace for the landed peasants. Russia is in the Balkans to stay. Granting no American armed intervention, only some great upheaval in the heart of Russia itself could weaken the grip of the present National Front governments to the point that the opposition in the Balkan countries could take over the control. Given enough time, the Communists can coerce compliance and can train up a new generation which would enthusiastically repudiate the past, thereby consolidating the Communist position.

The process will, however, not be one-sided. The peasants of the Balkans will in turn influence Communism and indirectly help fashion a type which, like Chinese Communism, is somewhat different from that imported from the Kremlin. (Since this was originally written, Tito's failure to push the collectivization of the Yugoslav peasants has gotten him into trouble with Moscow.)

Americans then must more and more regard the area as Russian-occupied, a conquest of war, which the Reds will continue to dominate because of their advantageous diplomatic and geographic position. Out of their occupation Russian sympathizers have argued that two decided gains would come: the lessening of the nationality and ethnic differences, which have heretofore been such a fertile field of ex-

8: Bojkoff K-4, 5 (no date) 1946 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

nicus and Galileo who opened for us the celestial world. We have at ths time the invention of the art of printing which helped the spread of ideas by books. Here is the age of most gifted masters of speech, beauty and marble, like Petrarch and Boccacio, Ariosto and Tasso, Camoens and Servantes, of Rabelais and Montaigne, of Shakespeare, Michel-Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Rafael and Tician. This is the period of great philosophers like Bacon, Giordano Bruno etc. etc ... Bulgaria was unable to benefit by all these miracles of rich material, intellectual, spiritual and esthetic culture ... At this same time, our half illiterate monks the only representatives of our intellectual life in this remote dark age, contemporaries of Ariosto and Tasso, of Shakespeare and Servantes, of Rafael and Tician, devoted their lives to the painstaking and tedious work of copying the lives of saints or of painting ikons, which betryed the complete conventionality and frigidity of Byzantine art!"

But neither the Turkish political, nor the Greek ecclesiastical slavery were in a position to suppress the spirit of the Bulgarian nation. It was encouraged by the enlightened groups of artizans, merchants and clergymen. A bright spark flashed all of a sudden in this dark period. This spark was the Slavic Bulgarian history of a Bulgarian monk of Macedonian origin called Paissi Hilendarski[1]). This was a hand written manuscript of 1762, which told the Bulgarian people of their glorious past, of their Kings and Patriarchs. The manuscript was called by the common people „The Book of Kings" and was copied and distributed widely in the Bulgarian lands. The plea of this Bulgarian monk to his people was „Oh Bulgarians, get to know your origin and your language". This was a forward call for the hard struggle to obtain schools and churches, enlightement, civilization and freedom of conscience: a struggle against anything that was Greek. The hatred, accumulated for centuries past — already 1083 years old — broke out with new force. This was the Bulgarian Renaissance.

„The Bulgarian Renaissance, as a process of development, has something in common with the Renaissance of Westren Europe:.

[1]) A monk of the Hilendar Monastery, Mont Alhos.

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„1. The Renaissance in both cases is not a casual or sudden change, but it passes trough a period of transition and preparation. The transitory period is the Middle Ages. The only difference is that the Middle Ages ended for Europe in the beginning of the 14th century, while in Bulgaria it lasted until the end of the 18th century.

„2. In both cases the carriers and promoters of the Renaissance ideas were men of public and economic affairs.

„3. Both in Italy an in Bulgaria, the leader of the movement appeared to be a prominent person: Petrarch in Italy and Paissi in Bulgaria.

„4. What particularly brings our Bulgarian Renaissance close to the Western European is the new conception of things national, of the national spirit and the reversion of language and literature to their original sources to this conception".[1])

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19. Bulgarian Exarchate. National Bulgarian Church, 1872.

We find the idea of the church at the bottom of Bulgarian national thought.

The conception of a national church is the fundamental thought that runs through Bulgarian history up to the present times.

The well known Romanian historian prof. N. Yorga stresses particularly the specific significance of the Bulgarian church in the political life of the Bulgarians:[2]) „The Bulgarian tradition, however, continued to live in the church, and this church represented the culture, the city life, the old and only intrinsic opposition in this same imperial conception against Hellenism, which conquered Byzantium".

The Bulgarians had accumulated in their hearts a profound animosity against the Greeks. Anything that was Greek was a synonym of oppression for them. Their ideal for freedom and independence was snugly preserved in their lofty mountains. The struggle for it began with new force and vigor. It was now a struggle for education, cultural advancement, free-

[1]) Shishmanoff, opus cit. p. 191.

[2]) N. Yorga; Histoire des Roumains et de la Roumanie Orientale vol. III, p. 112, Bukarest 1937; Cif. Prof. Nicolaeff, op. cit. p. 127.

8: Bojkoff K-4,5 (no date) 1946 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

000 the desire to appreciate this small and suffering country and to develop a respect for her, which she certainly deserves.

39. Bulgaria is the Land of Peace and Labour. The present state of Bulgaria's development is not due to the wealth of any natural resources, as this is the case with other countries more fortunate than she in that respect. She owes her advancement to the hard labour of her population. Hardly any traveller has crossed over her territory and failed to observe sympathetically the distinguishing traits
181 of Bulgaria. Here is how Cyprien Robert, describes the Bulgarians:[1])

„The martial abilities, their wealth and commercial experience made the Bulgarian people so dreadful in the beginning of the Middle Ages; to-day, however, the Bulgarian nation is the least prone and given to luxury as well as the most peace loving among European nations. All who know the present day Bulgarian praise him for his peace virtues. The Bulgarian is ready to render you a favor, he is industrious and has the peculiar ability to act with caution. But once, having made up his mind he goes on to do things with an amazing perseverence supported by an athletic force, which enables him to resist the greatest danger without boasting and with composure. Though the most oppressed of all the other people on the peninsula, the Bulgarians have not succumbed to humiliation and distress. As in all times, the look of the Bulgarian to-day is proud, his robust stature is high and handsome. His honesty is above and beyond reproach. You could safely entrust him with any amount of money and you may be sure that it would be delivered to its destination. People blame him that he trembles at the sight of the Turks. The Bulgarian does not tremble, but when he realizes that all resistance is futile, as a reasonable person, he knows how to submit".

• 186 Another traveller at the time of the Bulgarian insurrection of 1877, James Baker,[2]) writes the following: „... A peculiar trait of the history of Bulgaria was the great current of national feeling, which obsessed and continues to dominate

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[1]) Cyprien Robert, op. cit. p. 240, a. al.

[2]) J. Baker, Die Türken in Europa; autoris. deutsche Ausgabe. 2-e Auflage. Stuttgart. 1879. p. 24.

8: Bojkoff K-4, 5 (no date) 1946 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

the consciousness of this people. We do not hear of Bulgarian uprisals against their sovereigns, on the contrary, they always appear as a united nation fighting for its independence. This force of united behavior and of national consciousness makes a remarkable impression on any traveller, who visits the Bulgarians to-day. Each of them would come forward, willingly and in earnest, to offer himself as a sacrifice to the welfare of the nation. This is an attitude fraught with great potentialities and possibilities, provided it is guided properly".

Henry C. Barkley,[1]) a British civil engineer, was in Turkish time in charge of the construction of the railroad Tcherna Voda—Constanza (ca 1860) and had an ample opportunity to observe Bulgarians, Turks, Greeks and others at work. He writes: „Amongst the natives proper, far the best and most intelligent workmen were the Bulgars, and with proper education and good example they were capable of doing anything. Unfortunately, at present the only education for the Bulgar is found in the offices and shops of the Levantine merchants in Constantinople and other large towns, where commercial morality is so corrupt that they have no option but to turn out rogues... There are no schools, except those attached to the Greek church, where, I believe, such folly as teaching honesty is unthought of. For this reason the better people are to be avoided as much as possible, but there will be found a great deal of sterling good among the village peasants that only require development. They are steady, quiet, hardworking set of people, patient and unresisting under the Turkish yoke, but at the same time not cringling or servile like their brother-Christians, the Greeks and Armenians. And I have no doubt that were the Turks banished out of Bulgaria, the Bulgars would soon convert into one of the finest and most prosperous countries in Eastern Europe. As much as possible we employed these men on the line, and after years some of them became fitters, cleaners, locomotive drivers, and in fact filled all the places of skilled workmen and it is wonderful to think how they excelled, when one bears in mind how few had been their advantages.

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[1]) Henry C. Barkley, civil engineer, Between the Danube and the Black Sea or five years in Bulgaria, London, 1876, pp. 174—176.

the contempt of the Turks and Greeks, they did not need to be ashamed of their own traditions. In the past the Bulgarians had had their own empire and had received tribute from the wise Greeks and they had had the most progressive tsars and patriarchs of all the Slavonic peoples and they had been among the first peoples to accept the Christian faith, which they had later handed on with a rich literature to the other Slavs. 175 814

With its poetic inspiration and its ardent love for his country, the History of Paisi appeared as a torch to kindle the lowly and undeveloped national consciousness of Bulgaria. It set it ablaze and thus caused the surprising advance of the Bulgarian people. In one century they turned from an amorphous mass to one of the strongest nationalities of the Balkans. They raised their level of culture, and developed their art, science and literature. [186] 2/n

It goes without saying that the History of Paisi could not have worked this miracle, if it had not found a fertile soil in the souls of the Bulgarian people, and more than that, if the soil had not been cultivated by a long series of enthusiastic imitators of Paisi. Between 1800 and 1850 these writers, without stopping, first in manuscripts and later in printed books, continued to arouse the national consciousness of the Bulgarians and to spread enlightenment in their native land. The aims of these men were purely practical. The definite object of Sofrony Vratchanski, of Neofit Bozveli, of Neofit Rilski in their works which are almost always of a didactic character, was to help their people, to educate them and to lead them on the path of proper development. Yet so strong and so inspired was the love that these men had for their 533 814 186

2/n [i/e, the eighteenth century --- Analyst]

between 1840 and 1847 and we can say without exaggeration that he became a poet with the definite patriotic aim of adding the power of the living word to the other means which he was employing in the service of his people. For participating in conspiracies within the Turkish Empire, Rakovski lay for three years in a prison in Constantinople and later he organized a revolting band with which he operated in the Balkans. At the same time he composed the poem "A Mountain-Wanderer", he published journalistic articles, and made studies in folklore, all with the one aim of arousing the Bulgarians to revolt against the Turkish yoke, of giving them faith in their own power, and of convincing them that they are one of the chosen peoples of the earth, who are assured of a glorious future. Like Paisi and his followers, Rakovski was so inspired by his love for his country that he became a true poet and towers among his people not only for his personal heroism but for his books which won hundreds of adherents for the idea of Bulgarian independence.

The same is true of Lyuben Karavelov (1837-1879), for between 1870 and 1875 he took a personal part in the revolutionary struggle of the Bulgarians and he had great political influence as one of the founders of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committee. Yet he left a still greater reputation from his literary work which he treated as part of his patriotic mission. Like his contemporaries, he had a definitely practical aim—to arouse the spirit of the Bulgarians and urge them to struggle; amid the difficulties and tragedies of the time in which he worked, he kindled the souls of his people, became inspired himself and was turned into a true artist. Thus it was granted

538 people that without their endeavor, their works became
814 works of art and formed a stage in the development of
186 Bulgarian literature and the Bulgarian literary language. This gradually evolved under the guidance of the democratic spirit of the authors from the dead Church language which had predominated in the work of Paisi, until it approximated the Bulgarian colloquial dialects on which the modern language is based.

538 Not a little credit for the formation and crystalization
186 of the Bulgarian literary language and the development of modern Bulgarian literature must be given to the writers who walked in the steps of Paisi and his school and who were also public spirited men. This last circumstance explains the fact that the list of the most prominent authors includes the names of those Bulgarians who in the epoch preceding the political liberation of Bulgaria, the period between 1840 and 1875, took the leading and most self-sacrificing part in the cultural struggle for their country, for its spiritual awakening and its ecclesiastical independence, who fought in the revolting bands of various heroes, who worked inside the country in various revolutionary committees or with the Central Committee in Bucharest (Rumania was already free), and who thus tried in every way to secure the liberation of their country. Thus, whether we consider the men who appealed for aid in the struggles for ecclesiastical and national independence or list the writers or the leaders in any popular movement, we always come upon the names of Rakovski, Lyuben Karavelov, Drumev, and above all Khristo Botev.

The character of Sava Rakovski (1821-1867) is especially interesting and original in this group. He worked

538 to him to write such stories as the "Child of Mamin" and
186 "Bulgarians of the Old Times." These have permanent value and are more and more highly regarded for their clever observation and understanding and the realistic manner in which they picture the life and manners of the people in the little Bulgarian cities at the middle of the nineteenth century, and they are still counted among the most happy productions of Bulgarian artistic prose.

Another man who was primarily interested in public work was Vasil Drumev (1841-1901), who in 1872, following the steps of the first Bulgarian theatrical writer Dobri Voynikov, wrote a historical drama "Ivanku" which is one of the best Bulgarian dramas. Unfortunately Drumev did not find in literature a satisfactory outlet for his patriotism and his desire to aid his people and therefore after finishing "Ivanku" he entered the priesthood and devoted himself exclusively to educational and political activity, a clear example of the way in which the Bulgarian writers of this period were led by patriotism to commence or to terminate literary and artistic work.

This same patriotic fervor developed and forged Petko Rachev Slaveykov (1827-1895), one of the greatest Bulgarian poets of the older epoch, a man who exerted great influence on later Bulgarian literature. Slaveykov became a poet quite accidentally, in furtherance of his patriotic aims. His first poem was a satire, which he wrote when he was barely 16 or 17 against Ilarion, Bishop of Tirnovo, a Greek by nationality and a well-known Bulgarophobe. This commenced his struggles against the Greek clergy and the Turkish government which filled his entire life. While Slaveykov was wandering as a teacher throughout the whole of Bulgaria,

unable to remain long in any one spot because of the persecutions of his enemies, he began to write lyric poems to take the place of the Greek love songs, which were then sung throughout Bulgaria and which were a powerful factor in the Hellenizing of the educated Bulgarians. To aid the Bulgarian national rebirth, Slaveykov became a journalist and edited a satirical journal and later a political paper. Then from patriotic motives, he commenced the enormous task of translating the Gospels with the support of the American Bible Society. But the social-literary activity of Slaveykov did not exhaust his powers; it merely inspired the poet in minutes of quiet reflection to write some of the most beautiful lyric productions of Bulgarian literature. In 1927 when the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Slaveykov was being celebrated— his poems, although they had been neglected by the younger generation, showed the sincerity, deep sensitiveness and warm feeling of their author and again won high regard.

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Far above these writers of the pre-independence period, above Lyuben Karavelov, Drumev, and Petko Slaveykov, stands the dazzling and blinding Khristo Botev. Botev is the greatest Bulgarian poet and the most revered national hero. His short life created a mass of legends and these legends are even now repeated in Bulgaria from north to south and he wins all hearts by the clarity, beauty, and moral earnestness of his actions.

Khristo Botev (1848-1876) was born in the middle of the nineteenth century in Kalofer, a city in the Balkans not far from the celebrated Valley of Roses. His father was a good and enlightened teacher but he was loyal to

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186 the Turkish government. At home Khristo was trained to quiet and self-restraint but from his early years he felt in his veins the urging to a revolt against the Turkish oppressors and against the lamb-like toleration of his contempararies, especially their leaders (the Chorbadji), who looked upon every attempt to rouse the people against the Turks with even greater horror and consternation than did the Turks themselves. Who knows what would have happened to Botev in his little native city, where his patriotic revolutionary tendencies would have led him to ruin and destruction and where they could not have been guided and enlightened, had his father not sent him to Russia when he was 17? There in the land of Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Turgenev, Botev developed his character, thought over his career, and learned that he was to sacrifice himself for his people. But to sacrifice one's self in the best sense of the word, is to acquire unconquerable power— the power of a symbol, which cannot be separated from the conscience of the nation for which it serves as a noble example. His decision once made, Botev strove stubbornly and constantly to carry out his aims: to lay down his life for his country, without any other idea than that, as he puts it in one of his ballads, the people should some day say of him, "He died, poor man, for truth and freedom."

The last years of Botev's life were stormy. He remained in Russia until 1867; then for a short time he was a teacher in his native city, but later, instead of returning, as his father wished, to complete his education in Russia and become a physician, he emigrated to Rumania and began to prepare himself for active revolutionary work in Bulgaria. He became a member of

the Central Revolutionary Committee, edited the journals Budilnik (Alarm) and Zname (Banner), suffered poverty and maintained himself by writing and teaching. He finally wearied of emigré life and foreign conspiracies which revolted him by their uselessness and the atmosphere of intrigue with which they were surrounded. In 1876, when he was 28 years old, the revolts broke out in Bulgaria which gave the Turks the excuse for the reprisals characterized by Gladstone as the Bulgarian atrocities. Botev organized his own revolutionary band of about 200 men, seized an Austrian steamship, the "Radetski", crossed the Danube, landed on the Bulgarian coast and prepared to fight with his comrades for the liberation of his people. He failed to receive assistance from his compatriots and three days later he fell dead on the Vola, a barren Balkan height, and no one knows the location of his grave.

Thus the life of Botev is filled with the beauty of active self-sacrifice and with harmony between preaching and action. This beauty is increased by one remarkable fact; that it is dominated and permeated by the gleam of a poetical inspiration which surges in direct proportion to the revolutionary activity of Botev and is its direct expression. This inspiration he poured out in 22 poems, but among these are the most pieces of Bulgarian authorship; the ballad "Hadji Dimitar" and the lyric poems, "To my first love", "May", "On farewell", etc.

To analyze the poems of Botev without being able to cite them is sacrilegious for a Bulgarian and it is impossible to translate them. We can only say in characterization of them that they arose incidentally amid

538 the stormy life of Botev as sparks of molten gold which reflected his ardent soul. They speak the language of Botev; they are diverse in content and rhythm and dazzle by their imagery. Full of undoubted originality, they are sketched with an economy of means such as only world-poets use. The poems of Botev are short and yet they embrace much. Every element is powerful and harmonious and like an unexpected flash of lightning each directly affects the feeling of the reader, so that he understands easily and surely the aim and idea of Botev's life, love for his country, above which there is nothing in the world and for the liberation of which, if a man falls, "he does not die, but even the animals and nature mourn for him and the bards sing in his honor", as he says in one of his poems.

How true these thoughts of Botev were can be seen from the fact that after fifty years every Bulgarian mourns for him. His name is echoed in the defiles of the Balkan Mountains and the broad Thracian and Danubian plains and rings without ceasing in the souls of the Bulgarians as the expression of the finest man whom their country has brought forth.

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538 The gigantic shadow of Botev falls across the gulf
186 which separates enslaved from free Bulgaria, for as is well known, the country was separated from Turkey as an autonomous principality as a result of the Russian-Turkish War of 1877-8. On the later side of the gulf stands the figure of another great poet, balancing the work of Botev. This man has a significance for Bulgarian culture and Bulgarian literature, if we estimate this by direct and evident influence, perhaps even greater than

has Botev. It is Ivan Vazov who first carried the fame of Bulgarian literature beyond the boundaries of his native land and whose activity of 50 years from 1872 to 1921 witnessed the joys and hopes of young Bulgaria, its heroic struggles for national unification and the crushing failure of these hopes in 1918 and who was a sensitive echo of all the joys and sorrows of his country. 538 186

Ivan Vazov (1850-1921) is the first Bulgarian poet who gave expression to his patriotism not by direct public work— as did his predecessors— but exclusively by unceasing artistic production through which he strove to express all that he saw in his country: its nature, its people, and also the ideals towards which it should strive. Bulgaria in all its manifold aspects— that is the content of the literary work of Vazov, who sacrificed to his inspiration his personal life and all his other interests, so that he could offer it worthy service solemnly and convincingly.

The sacrifice which Vazov offered to his country was not in vain. There is no Bulgarian writer who so truly and accurately reflects his country as does Vazov. There is no Bulgarian writer like Vazov whose works demand the attention of every foreigner who would know Bulgaria.

For example, if a man is interested in the past of Bulgaria, let him turn to the historical dramas of Vazov on themes from the old Bulgarian Empire, or his "Legends of Tsarevets", which describe touchingly the struggles between Bulgaria and Byzantium. If he seeks the less distant past or the rebirth of Bulgaria, he has the splendid "Epic of the Heroes", in which he represents as in living marble the figures of Paisi, Rakovski, 175 538 186

538 Levski and the Brothers Milandinovi. If he wishes to
186 learn of the uprisings which were the indirect cause of
175 the liberation of Bulgaria and turned the attention of Western Europe to its fate, he can read the best novel of Vazov, "Under the Yoke" which has been translated into every culture-language and which describes with surprising artistry the life of a Balkan city before the liberation, the secret work of the group of rebels, the uprising which they prepare and which the Turks suppress with fire and sword. If he desires to understand the life of the newly liberated Bulgaria, he can find what he seeks in the novels of Vazov as "The New Land" and the "Empress Kazalar." If he would know how Bulgaria passed through the series of war which she waged, in which she conquered heroically without being able to reap any profit from her victories, he must turn again to Vazov and to his many collections of poetry, in which we find expression of all the pains of Bulgaria, all her hopes and disillusionments. Thus every one must turn to Vazov who wishes to know of Bulgaria with her landscape, her fields and mountains, the Balkans, Rilo and Rhodope, the Danube and the Black Sea.

538 It is superfluous to list the works of Vazov, for this would be merely the listing of all the inner and outer characteristics of Bulgaria in a perfect mirror. It is better to say that their significance is to be found not only in the fact that they focus as in a lens everything that is important in Bulgarian life but that this is done artistically, with the aid of a talent which is gifted for both poetry and prose, and which produces its effects with great music of phrase, vividness of imagery, a

Soviet groove. Secondly, Bulgaria is highly important to Russia strategically. She flanks enemy Jugoslavia. She provides the only direct approach to Greece since Tito has closed the main route. She adjoins Turkey, on whom the Soviets desire to exert pressure from all directions. She is, as we have seen, Russia's chosen instrument of intervention in the Macedonian question. On every count she is the country which, more directly than any other except Poland, can be useful to Russia in the present line-up of European forces. It is not by chance that she and Poland had the honor of being the first to receive high officers of the Soviet Army as commanders-in-chief of their troops.

The sources of opposition are two. One is nationalism. It may be called Titoism or Kostovism, but it is always treason. Nationalists are dealt with as Petkov and Kostov were dealt with. These two, such poles apart, are simply conspicuous examples among tens of thousands who have suffered for opposing the Communization or Sovietization of their country. Any successors they may have, whether noble like Petkov or hateful like Kostov, will be put down with the same irresistible brutality.

The other source of opposition is the peasantry. The peasants resist being made into sharecroppers. They do not think that they are being forced into collectives so that a great social goal can be achieved but in order that a group of adventurers can exploit their hold on them and on the country more conveniently. The Communists are everything that peasants hate and fear—the city slicker, the government bureaucrat. These newcomers in the villages, wearing city clothes, often speaking with a foreign accent, urge the peasants to enter collectives for their own good. Those who do are only one degree better off than those who do not—they are allowed to live, while those who refuse starve. But they live as serfs. They will work for the rest of their lives, as they figure it, to support others who will not or cannot work so hard as they must do—other peasants who have let their lands run down and are glad to merge with those who have kept theirs up, and surplus townsfolk who will never learn to "pay their way." That there are other answers to such arguments than force does not matter. The answer has been given, and it is force.

[i.e. Opposition to Sovietization---Analyst]